

Online Comment

Application H22-0887-21
Location Land North of High Road Weston Spalding
Proposal Erection of 68 dwellings and associated works

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For/Against Comments

This office has commented on previous proposals for this site, and we would like to reiterate our earlier advice that the site should be subject to an archaeological evaluation.

The proposed development is situated away from the historic centre of Weston, but in an area that has previously produced evidence for Saxon settlement and other activity, as well as earlier remains from the Roman period. These were revealed during evaluation ahead of the construction of the Weston bypass, and in evaluation trenching associated with the adjacent proposed housing development to the east of this site on the north side of High Road.

A small area of geophysical survey within the proposed development associated with a previous application on this site has already revealed anomalies which may be indicative of archaeological remains surviving within the area to be developed.

This present application includes a Heritage Statement that considers the potential impacts on below ground remains based on the previous fieldwork discussed above. The statement notes that the development would be most likely to have a direct impact on archaeological remains during site preparation, construction and landscaping. It goes on to recommend that archaeological fieldwork may therefore be required, beginning with a geophysical survey of the rest of the site that has not already been investigated. This office agrees with this approach, but we would advise against this being carried out post-determination by condition as a form of mitigation. This is because the results of the field evaluation should be provided to the local planning authority in order that the potential impacts can be fully understood as part of the decision making process.

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation." - National Planning Policy Framework, section 16, paragraph 199.

There is therefore insufficient site specific information available with which to make a reasoned decision on the impact of the proposed development upon the historic environment. The developer should expect, if this application continues, to undertake as a minimum non-intrusive archaeological surveys, and depending on results, trial excavation prior to determination. This should provide the local planning authority with sufficient site specific information in order reach a reasoned decision regarding the impact of the proposed development on the historic environment.